



NC-TOPPS SNAPSHOT

A Profile of Consumers with Co-occurring Disorders

Adults living with a mental health or substance abuse disorder face unique challenges such as treatment availability, stigma, access to care, discrimination, etc. For those individuals who are diagnosed with a mental health and substance abuse disorder, their path to betterment is increasingly difficult due to the compounded nature of their condition. NC-TOPPS, a web-based system for gathering outcome and performance data, was used to better understand how individuals diagnosed with a co-occurring condition differed from those diagnosed with only a mental health or substance abuse disorder.

Chart Description. The chart to the right provides a statewide glimpse of three adult consumer populations—those diagnosed with a mental health (MH) disorder, substance abuse (SA) disorder, or both (co-occurring). Those ages 31 to 50 comprised the highest age group in each population.

Co-occurring. Of the three groups, consumers diagnosed with a co-occurring condition have the highest rates of mental health symptomology, suicidal thoughts, health care usage, relocation, unemployment and the poorest self-perceptions of quality of life. The two most frequently diagnosed disorders of adults with a co-occurring condition were drug dependency (55%) and major depression (41%). Sixty percent of consumers were Caucasian.

Substance Abuse only. In contrast, consumers diagnosed with only a substance abuse condition reported the lowest rates of mental health symptomology, suicidal thoughts, unemployment, and highest self-perceptions of quality of life. The two most frequently diagnosed disorders of adults with a substance abuse only condition were drug dependency (72%) and alcohol dependency (43%). Fifty percent of consumers were Caucasian.

Mental Health Only. Consumers diagnosed with only a mental health condition reported the lowest rates of substance use, absence of insurance, and were the most residentially stable. The two most frequently diagnosed disorders of adults with a mental health only condition were major depression (45%) and schizophrenia (21%). Fifty-eight percent of consumers were Caucasian.

Dialogue Question:

How are services/programs designed and implemented to address the unique needs of each subgroup, consumers diagnosed with a mental health (MH) disorder, substance abuse (SA) disorder, or both (co-occurring)?

	Type of Diagnosis		
	Mental Health	Substance Abuse	Co-Occurring
	N = 19,216	N = 16,816	N = 4,641
Demographics			
Males			
African Am.	14%	27%	18%
Caucasian	21%	29%	31%
Other	2%	5%	2%
Females			
African Am.	22%	15%	17%
Caucasian	37%	21%	29%
Other	4%	2%	2%
Age			
18 to 30	30%	37%	32%
31 to 50	47%	55%	56%
51 & over	23%	8%	12%
No Health Insurance	36%	72%	58%
Mental Health Symptoms (severe or very severe)	40%	16%	43%
Had Suicidal Thoughts (past 3 months)	35%	19%	44%
Substance Use (past 12 months)			
Heavy Alcohol use	6%	49%	46%
Heroine/opiate, cocaine, or marijuana	12%	79%	68%
Health Care Services Use (past 3 months)			
Emergency room	20%	20%	33%
Crisis contacts	11%	11%	19%
MH inpatient	11%	5%	16%
Moved two times or more (past year)	18%	27%	33%
Unemployed (past 3 months)	59%	57%	66%
Quality of Life (rated "fair" or "poor")			
Emotional well-being	80%	62%	85%
Family Relationships	62%	56%	71%

TIME PERIOD: INITIAL ASSESSMENTS CONDUCTED JULY 1, 2007–FEBRUARY 2008

SOURCE: NC-TOPPS ADULT SUBSTANCE ABUSE, MENTAL HEALTH, & CO-OCCURRING CONSUMERS REPORTS – STATEWIDE

* This report excludes methadone consumers.